

Examples of Other Medicine Take-Back Programs

Medicine Take-Back Programs in Other Countries

Many countries have established medicine return systems, including Great Britain, Portugal, Sweden, Australia, and Canada. In Spain, France, and British Columbia, the medicine take-back systems are provided by drug manufacturers.

British Columbia, Canada (population 4.53 million)

- For more than 14 years, the pharmaceutical industry has funded and operated a secure medicine return program, as required by the B.C. Recycling Regulation.
- Brand-owner pharmaceutical companies work together through a non-profit stewardship association to provide the program. Costs to each pharmaceutical company are determined by the stewardship association based on sales and return data.
- 95% of pharmacies in the province participate voluntarily as medicine collection sites.
- In 2010, 133,474 pounds of medicines were disposed of at a total cost of \$467,645 (U.S.).
- Increased public outreach by drug producers in recent years has resulted in a 250% increase in pounds of medicine collected from 2007 to 2010. A 2010 survey found that 75% of B.C. residents who are aware of the medicine take-back program are using it.

Local Ordinances To Require Pharmaceutical Manufacturer Provided Programs

City and County of San Francisco, CA (pop. 805,235)

Ordinance Considered & Tabled in late 2010; “Pharma” funding voluntary pilot program

- “Safe Drug Disposal” Ordinance would require drug producers selling medicines in the county to provide a drug stewardship program. The ordinance passed one vote of the Board of Supervisors on 11/23/10 and was expected to pass a final vote. PhRMA and BayBio were strongly opposed to the ordinance. The Mayor’s office intervened to encourage a voluntary public-private partnership.
- Voluntary Pilot Program: PhRMA offered \$100,000 and Genentech offered \$10,000 in grants to the City to operate a pilot program at pharmacy and police collection sites. As a result, the ordinance was officially suspended in December 2010.
The City’s 15 month pilot started in March 2012 at all 10 S.F. police stations and 12 local pharmacies.
- “Safe Drug Disposal Information” Ordinance: The Board of Supervisors enacted an ordinance as a supplement to the pilot program that requires all stores selling pharmaceuticals in S.F. to advertise how residents can safely dispose of medicines through take-back sites.

Alameda County, CA (pop. 1.5 million)

Ordinance under consideration. June 5, 2012 final vote planned.

- Existing grant-funded drug take-back: County has been operating a collection system for non-controlled drugs at 4 HHW facilities and 20 pharmacies, hospitals, and clinics, funded unstably through grants, such as from wastewater agencies and public hospitals. County has also been assisting Sheriff’s program (1 drop site) by sorting out and disposing of non-controlled drugs collected by Sheriff.
- Alameda Co Board of Supervisors proposed ordinance would require drug manufacturers selling medicines in the county to finance and operate a residential drug take-back program, and provide education. Ordinance is similar to proposed S.F. ordinance and WA state legislation.
- Legislative process: Hearing held Feb 28, 2012 where the ordinance was approved 4-0, with 1 Supervisor absent. A second vote, currently scheduled for June 5th, is needed to enact the ordinance. Four public stakeholder meetings are scheduled during April and May to engage elected officials, pharmaceutical industry representatives, and the community. PhRMA and BayBio companies are currently in opposition to the ordinance.